

NSC BRIEFING

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- I. Armed civilian attack on presidential palace Havana on 13 March was probably intended to spark a full-fledged revolution to oust President Batista who seized power five years ago this week.
 - A. Attackers were primarily students and included Jose Echeverria, leader of communist-infiltrated Federation of University students, reported killed.
 - B. Government claims to have situation under control.
 - C. Prompt military action may discourage new outbreaks in Havana.
 - D. Rebel forces may attack government installations in Oriente Province where there is strong public opposition to the government.
 - II. Batista has been weakened in past three and a half months by his failure to control intensified anti-government activity despite prolonged suspension constitutional guarantees and extreme repressive measures.
 - A. Terrorism has persisted since 30 November 1956 revolutionary outbreak in Santiago de Cuba and small invasion of Oriente on 2 December 1956 by members of "26 of July" movement of rebel leader Fidel Castro.
 - B. Government has been unable to eliminate Castro's small force in Oriente mountains.
- 25X1C C. [REDACTED] revolutionary group whose main force was led by Echeverria was ready to act, convinced that any uprising begun in Havana would succeed.

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25X1C

B. Echeverria last summer signed pact with Castro who, [REDACTED]

25X1C [REDACTED] has called for island-wide general strike 15 March.

III. Military appears again to have supported Batista, but there have been indications of continuing unrest in this group.

A. Prolongation of serious political unrest may reduce its key support of Batista.

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